

I Claim:

1. A printing press comprising a number of different printing stations, each of said stations having an ink applicator for depositing ink, an adjacent first rotatable cylinder for receiving said ink in a nip therebetween, and at least a second rotatable cylinder over which passes the substrate to be printed upon in a subsequent nip with either the said first or another rotatable cylinder;

at least one of said stations having a multi-layered flexible body attached to the periphery of said first rotatable cylinder, said multi-layered flexible body having an outermost layer which receives said ink from the ink applicator, and which is secured to an innermost layer of a different material, said outermost layer being cut to provide spaced cut-out areas which leave outermost areas projecting beyond the cut-out areas to cover substrate areas desired to be printed upon; and

at least another one of said stations having a rotatable ink-receiving first cylinder which receives the ink in a nip with the associated ink applicator, and where said first cylinder has a periphery for printing letters and/or numbers each of a size which is a fraction of the size of said areas which receive ink from projecting portions of said outermost layer of said multi-layered flexible body.

2. The printing press of claim 1 wherein the printing station which prints letters and/or numbers is positioned on the press after the printing station which prints with the said multi-layered flexible body, so said letters and/or number can be printed over parts of said areas of much greater size.

3. A printing press station comprising:  
an ink applicator for depositing ink;  
an adjacent first rotatable cylinder for receiving said ink in a nip with said ink applicator;

and a multi-layered flexible body attached to the periphery of said first rotatable cylinder, said multi-layered flexible body having an outermost layer which receives said ink from said ink applicator, and which typically is cut after it is

secured to an innermost layer of a different material, and before said multi-layered flexible body is attached to said first rotatable cylinder to provide spaced cut-out areas which leave outermost layer areas projecting beyond the cut-out areas to form ink-applying areas to cover substrate areas to be printed upon, and which extend over areas much greater in size than any substrate areas which are to receive letters and/or numbers.

4. The printing press station of claim 3 wherein all the layers of said multi-layered ink-receiving flexible body are see-through layers, so that before said flexible body is attached to said first rotatable cylinder a template containing a cut-pattern can be placed beneath the innermost layer of said flexible body, so it is visible through said outermost layer, enabling said outermost layer to be cut through to the outermost surface of the adjacent innermost layer.

5. The printing press of claim 1 where the outermost surface of the innermost layer of the multi-layered flexible body is imaged with the cut-pattern so it serves as its own template.

6. The printing press station of claim 3 where the outermost surface of the innermost layer of the multi-layered flexible body is imaged with the cut-pattern so it serves as its own template.

7. The printing press of claim 1 wherein all of the layers of said multi-layered ink-receiving flexible body are see-through layers, so that before said ink-receiving flexible body is attached to said first rotatable cylinder, a template containing a cut-pattern can be placed beneath the innermost layer of said body and be visible through said outermost layer, so that said outermost layer can be cut through along the cut lines of the template to the outermost surface of the innermost layer of said multi-layered flexible body.

8. A method of printing on a substrate patterns other than letters or number, said method comprising:

providing an ink applicator for depositing ink, an adjacent first rotatable cylinder for receiving said ink in a first nip therebetween, and at least a second rotatable cylinder over which passes the substrate to be printed upon in a second nip with either said first or another rotatable cylinder;

providing a multi-layered flexible body having an outermost ink-receiving layer which is secured to an innermost layer of a different material, and placing said body on a support surface with said outermost layer at the top thereof, and cutting through only said outermost layer along a cut-pattern to create ink-applying areas of said outermost layer which project beyond the cut-out areas;

attaching said multi-layered flexible body to the periphery of said first rotatable cylinder, the projecting portions of said outermost layer of said multi-layered body being on the outside surface of said first cylinder enabling it to receive said ink from said applicator; and

operating the ink applicator to deposit ink on the projecting portions of the multi-layered flexible body.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the outermost layer of said multi-layered flexible body is translucent or transparent, and said cutting operation is manually conducted following cut lines visible through said outermost layer and formed on said innermost layer of said multi-layered flexible body and/or a template placed and visible therebeneath, so that the cut-pattern is visible to the person doing the cutting.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein a programmable automatic cutting machine with a cutting edge cuts through the outermost layer.

11. A method of printing letters and/or numbers on a substrate, and also printing areas on said substrate having portions with no letters or numbers, said method comprising;

providing at least a first and a second printing station on said press for respectively printing substrate areas containing letters and/or numbers, and areas of much greater size for said portions with no letters or numbers, both of said stations

having an ink applicator for depositing ink, an adjacent first rotatable cylinder for receiving said ink in a nip therebetween, and at least a second rotatable cylinder over which passes the substrate to be printed upon in a nip with either the said first or another rotatable cylinder;

providing a multi-layered flexible body having an outermost ink-receiving layer which is secured to an innermost layer of a different material, and placing said body on a support surface so that said outermost layer is cut along a cut-pattern to leave outermost areas which project beyond the cut-out areas to form ink-applying areas;

attaching said multi-layered flexible body to the periphery of said first rotatable cylinder which is to apply ink onto said substrate areas of much greater size than said substrate areas which are to receive letters and/or numbers, said outermost layer of said multi-layered flexible body being on the outside surface of the latter cylinder to receive ink from the associated ink applicator, the other print station which is to print letters and/or numbers not having said multi-layered flexible body; and

operating said ink applicators respectively to deposit ink on the projecting portions of the multi-layered flexible body carried by the associated first rotatable cylinder, and to deposit ink on the associated adjacent first rotatable cylinder.

12. The method of claim 10 wherein said printing station having said multi-layered body on the ink-receiving first rotatable cylinder is ahead of the other station applying letters and/or numbers so that, if desired, said second station can print letters or numbers over some of the areas printed upon by said first station.

13. The printing press station of claim 3 wherein the outermost layer of the multi-layered flexible body is impervious, so when ink is deposited on its outer surface by an ink applicator all of the ink lays up on it.

14. The method of claim 11 wherein the outermost layer of the multi-layered flexible body is impervious, so when ink is deposited on its outer surface by an ink applicator all of the ink lays up on it.

15. The printing press station of claim 13 wherein said outermost and innermost layers are made of see-through synthetic plastic materials secured together with a see-through adhesive material so that, if desired, a person who wishes to do so can cut-through said outermost layer subsequent to the placement of a template having cut lines to follow beneath said innermost layer before the multi-layered body is applied to said first rotatable cylinder.

16. The method of claim 11 wherein said outermost and innermost layers are made of see-through synthetic plastic materials and are adhesively secured together by a see-through adhesive material, and before said multi-layer body is applied to said first rotatable cylinder a person manually cuts through said outermost layer following cut lines on a template placed beneath said innermost layer.

17. The printing press station of claim 3 wherein said outermost layer of said multi-layered body is made of a see-through synthetic plastic material having a thickness of about .020 inches and is adhesively secured to said innermost layer thereof by a see-through layer of adhesive material of about .001 inches thick, and said innermost layer having on the upper surface thereof a pattern of cut-lines visible through said outermost and adhesive layers to aid a person wishing to cut through said outermost layer following said cut lines to form said cut-out areas can do so before said multi-layered body is applied to said first rotatable cylinder.

18. The printing press station of claim 3 wherein said outermost layer is a see-through layer in the .015 - .050" caliper range and is adhesively secured to said innermost layer by a see-through adhesive layer having a thickness of about .001 inches so that at least the outer surface of said innermost layer is visible.

19. The printing press station of claim 18 wherein said innermost layer is a see-through layer having a thickness in the range of about .004 to .020 inches.

20. The printing press station of claim 18 wherein said innermost and outermost layers are made of see-through synthetic plastic materials.